

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

66011

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APPROVED BY AF/W:TWMSMITH

AF/I:LSHURTLEFF

-----062319 270003Z /65

R 262037Z APR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO RUTABA/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 8965

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 106637

FOL RPT LAGOS 5068 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ABIDJAN BONN BRUSSELS
CANBERRA COPENHAGEN DAKAR MANILA NAIROBI NEW DELHI PARIS
STOCKHOLM 21 APR 78 QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 5068

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, EGEN, EAID, PORG, NI

SUBJECT: FMG REACTION TO USG HUMAN RIGHTS DEMARCHE

REF: (A) STATE 015725, (B) STATE 097953

1. SUMMARY: IN RESPONSE TO INVITATION TO BILATERAL DISCUSSION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN LIBREVILLE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR ECONOMIC DEPARTMENT
MEA ANI SAID FMG WOULD OPPOSE ACTIVELY ANY U.S. EFFORT TO MAKE
'NON-ECONOMIC' CRITERIA SUCH AS HUMAN RIGHTS PART OF AFDF DECISION
MAKING. ANI EXPRESSED BELIEF THAT MOST 'THIRD-WORLD' GOVERNMENTS
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ALSO OPPOSED U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS PROPOSAL. HE STRESSED FMG VERY
INTERESTED IN HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM, BUT STATED IT SHOULD BE DIS-
CUSSED ON 'BILATERAL LEVEL' IN LAGOS. FMG STILL REVIEWING POSITION
ON SUBJECT AND WILL REQUEST FORMAL MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR EASUM
IN NEAR FUTURE. FMG THUS DECLINES INVITATION FOR CONCURRENT
BILATERAL DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AT LIBREVILLE AFDF MEE4ING.
END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF DELIVERED USG INVITATION FOR CONCURRENT BILATERAL DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WITH FMG AT LIBREVILLE AFDF MEETING TO DEPUTY DIRECTOR ECONOMIC DEPARTMENT MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS A. ANI. AFTER LISTENING TO EMBOFF'S PRESENTATION MADE ON LINES REFTELS, ANI STATED THAT NIGERIA WAS VERY INTERESTED IN PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGHOUT WORLD AND THAT NIGERIAN HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD WAS 'NOT BAD DESPITE HAVING A MILITARY GOVERNMENT'. NONETHELESS, FMG BELIEVES USG ATTEMPT TO 'FORCE HUMAN RIGHTS CRITERIA ON INTERNATIONAL LENDING INSTITUTIONS IS A MISTAKE' WHICH FMG WILL FIGHT 'TOOTH AND NAIL'.

3. ANI SAID FMG IS BASING POLICY ON THREE ARGUMENTS. FIRST, IFIS ECONOMIC PRESSURE WOULD HAVE LITTLE EFFECT ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS, I.E., 'DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THE AFDF'S NOT GIVING A LOAN TO UGANDA BECAUSE OF ITS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WILL CAUSE AMIN TO CHANGE HIS WAYS.' SECOND, SINCE POVERTY CREATES A POLITICAL CLIMATE CONDUCTIVE TO THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, THE PROPER WAY TO ATTACK THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IS TO ELIMINATE POVERTY. DENIAL OF DEVELOPMENT FUNDS BECAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS ONLY PRESERVES POVERTY AND HENCE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. THIRD, ALTHOUGH USG MAY BE WELL INTENTIONED IN TRYING TO INTRODUCE 'NON-ECONOMIC CRITERIA' INTO IFIS DECISION MAKING, USG SUCCESS WOULD BE A PRECEDENT WHICH COULD BE ABUSED LATER. ANI CITED US LEGISLATION WHICH CALLS FOR USG TO OPPOSE IFIS LOANS FOR 'OIL NUT' PROJECTS AS EXAMPLE OF ABUSE. EMBOFF REBUTTED, CONFIDENTIAL

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BUT ANI WAS NOT MOVED.

4. ANI SAID MANY OTHER 'THIRD WORLD' NATIONS WERE OPPOSED TO USG HUMAN RIGHTS DEMARCHE, ESPECIALLY THE ACP LOME CONVENTION STATES, FOR THE SAME REASONS AS NIGERIA, AND PREDICTED THAT THE USG WOULD BE 'UNPLEASANTLY SURPRISED' IF IT INTRODUCED MATTER IN LIBREVILLE. HE COUNSELED US NOT TO HAVE ANY SUCH BILATERALS AT MEETING. WHEN EMBOFF AGAIN STRESSED THAT USG WAS NOT CONSIDERING MAKING HUMAN RIGHTS PART OF LIBREVILLE AGENDA AND ONLY USING OCCASION FOR CONCURRENT BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS, ANI SAID THAT OPPONENTS OF USG POLICY WOULD 'BRING INTO GENERAL MEETING WHAT THEY HEAR IN THE CORRIDORS.'

5. ANI SAID PROPER FORUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WAS HIGH LEVEL BILATERAL DISCUSSION AND ANNOUNCED THAT MEA WAS STILL WORKING ON POSITION WHICH IT WOULD PRESENT FORMALLY TO AMBASSADOR EASUM IN NEAR FUTURE. HE RESTRICTED BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS TO LAGOS OR WASHINGTON EXCLUSIVELY. ANI BELIEVES NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR TO US LOMOSO HAS ALREADY OR SOON WILL MAKE ABOVE POINTS TO DEPARTMENT.

6. FOR THESE REASONS, FMG FEELS IT INAPPROPRIATE FOR FMG REP

AT LIBREVILLE MEETING (MIDDLE LEVEL OFFICER AKINSANYA) TO HAVE
BILATERAL SESSION WITH USG OFFICIALS.

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH ANI OFTEN TAKES HARD LINE STANCE ON
MULTILATERAL ISSUES, WE BELIEVE HIS STATEMENTS ARE AN
ACCURATE REFLECTION OF EVOLVING FMG POLICY AND THAT WE CAN
EXPECT STRONG FMG OPPOSITION TO U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY IN
RELATION TO THE IFIS. FMG HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY FOCUSED ON
THIS ISSUE BUT CLEARLY HAS BEGUN TO DO SO.
WIMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMARCHE, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE106637
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: BRIAN KIRKPATRICK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780179-0387
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780414/aaaaakyw.tel
Line Count: 127
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2fad2fa7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 15725, 78 STATE 97953
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2839247
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FMG REACTION TO USG HUMAN RIGHTS DEMARCHE
TAGS: SHUM, EGEN, EAID, PORG, NI, US
To: ADDIS ABABA KINSHASA MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2fad2fa7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014